

**United States Environmental Protection Agency
Criminal Investigation Division
Investigative Activity Report**

Case Number:

1000-0494

Case Title:

Cooke Aquaculture Fish Farm Release

Subject of Report:

2017-10-30 Interview of [REDACTED]

Reporting Office:

Seattle, WA, Area Office

Activity Date:

October 30, 2017

Reporting Official and Date:

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

09-NOV-2017, Signed by: [REDACTED]

Approving Official and Date:

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
16-NOV-2017, Approved by: [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

SYNOPSIS

On October 30, 2017, SA [REDACTED] and Washington State Department of Ecology employee, Kessina Lee, interviewed [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

DETAILS

On October 30, 2017, Washington State Department of Ecology employee, Kessina Lee, and I interviewed [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] After being notified of the identity of the interviewing agent and the nature of the interview, [REDACTED] provided the following information:

On August 24, 2017, at approximately 1500 hours they were in their personal vessel near Cypress Island, Washington. Upon their arrival in Deepwater Bay, near a series of aquaculture net pens, they set crab traps on the recommendation of [REDACTED]. They did not notice any unusual tides, weather or animals in the Deepwater area. They observed that the two southern net pens were closer to one another than the more northern net pen, which was more north of their position in Deepwater Bay.

They were located between the most southern and the middle net pen when they noticed that the middle net pen (Net Pen #2) was making an unusual noise. They were located approximately 100 feet from Net Pen #2. From the northern side of Net Pen #2 they heard an unusual noise which sounded like a piece of steel being dragged across another piece of steel. They then saw a large chain dragging across the deck of Net Pen #2. They are unsure if Net Pen #2 was moving under the chain or the chain was moving over the top of the net pen, but one of them was moving. Shortly after they noticed this activity, the net pen began to climb into the air. It appeared that a northern buoy was moving and the net pen was collapsing. (Picture 154706) They also believed that a southwest buoy was moving as well. It appeared the Net Pen #2 was dragging in a southerly direction.

They observed a worker on the most southern net pen and got his attention. The worker yelled that he had informed his company of the situation with a statement similar to "I called the boss." They would describe this person as a Hispanic male approximately 30 years of age wearing blue jeans and t-shirt. Approximately 20-30 minutes later at 1600 hours, men, assumed to be Cooke employees, in a skiff came to the net pens and boarded Net Pen #2. (Picture 170228) Eventually some of the Cooke employees towed away a section of Net Pen #2 which had a small house located on top. (Picture 161912) Approximately 90 minutes later a tugboat arrived on scene to assist in the recovery efforts. During this time, the workers on Net Pen #2 requested them to clear the area and they complied.

While documenting the activities [REDACTED] called 911 at approximately 1540 hours to report the event.

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This information was relayed by Skagit County 911 to several agencies and she received several phone calls from the Skagit County Department of Emergency Management, the United States Coast Guard and the Washington State Department of Ecology.

They stayed on scene of the incident until approximately 1900 hours and then left the area.

On August 27, 2017, [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

During a later conversation with [REDACTED] described witnessing a similar situation with Net Pen #2 in July of 2017. [REDACTED] witnessed the August 19 incident involving Net Pen #2.

Agent's Note: [REDACTED] was the major contributor to this interview with [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

ATTACHMENT

Letter from [REDACTED] to Anacortes American RE Fish Pens Failure.pdf
20170819_154706.jpg
20170819_170228.jpg
20170819_161912.jpg